

There is the tale, told by an anonymous Beach Boy, about an outrageous instance of Brian Wilson's creative humor. Brian was about 18. The family was preparing to eat dinner. Brian got his father's plate, went to the bathroom, dropped his pants and squeezed a pretty good-sized shit onto it, brought it back and put it on his father's place. The father came in and blew his mind. A turd for dinner. "Who did this!" Carl, sensing impending disaster, started to cry. Brian, though, was laughing. His punishment was to crouch outside with his arms behind his back and eat with the dogs. This story will be denied in the following pages.

# The Beach Boys: A California Saga

by Tom Nolan

With Additional Material by David Felton

## Part Two: Tales of Hawthorne

I'm bugged at my old man  
And he doesn't even know where  
it's at

—Brian Wilson

FATHER MURRY WILSON and his wife Audree raised their three famous sons in the post-World-War-II stucco community of Hawthorne, Calif. A strict, self-made rugged individualist, Murry borrowed on their modest home to start his own business, dealing in heavy machinery. But his real love was music. He wrote songs, sang them to his family and friends, had some published. No hits. Once he wrote English lyrics to the B side of some Gordon MacRae single but says he never got paid for it.

Eventually, in 1960, Murry realized his most promising musical creations were his sons, Brian, Dennis and Carl, and decided to sink heavy machine money and time into producing their first hits and selling the boys to Capitol Records. He managed the group until 1964, when ulcers and arguments forced him to semi-retire and devote most of his energy to publishing his own and Beach Boys music. He continued dabbling with new singing and songwriting talent, including a Beach-Boys-type group called the Sun Rays, who had two hits, and a songwriting plumber named Eck Kynor, whom Murry discovered while having some pipes repaired in his home. Murry even got an album of his own songs, *The Many Moods of Murry Wilson*, released on Capitol. ("The talented father of the famous Beach Boys presents instrumental interpretations of his and other original compositions.")

But the Beach Boys remain his real management success and, of course, his proudest achievement. Today he lives in the less modest surroundings of Nixonian Whittier, on the other side of Los Angeles County. Yet, as Murry fondly recalls those good-fighting show biz times with his boys in the early Sixties, one can still detect a little Hawthorne in the man.

"See, the Beach Boys," explained Murry, "the Wilson Boys, have always heard music in their home from my writing songs and friends of ours who came over. We were all so poor we'd just sit around singing and on occasion drinking a glass of brew. Not the children, the adults. And then I bought a Hammond electric organ, on time, and we'd play duets, my wife and I. And then Brian would get in the act and sing. All they ever heard was music in their house. And, on occasion, family arguments."

Murry let out a hearty laugh, then got serious again.

"So, you understand, their training has been Americana type music, stuff that our friends would come over and sing; and their cousin, Mike Love, was hearing a lot of music in his home at the same time, and they'd sing. Americana. See, a lot of the public doesn't realize this, but the Beach Boys' style has had a flavor of

Americana. Brian sings about, he's written a lot of his songs about his own life and himself, like 'In My Room.' That was written, you know, about his room. He'd go in there and ponder the worries of the day, an argument with a girlfriend, or the happy times. And then he later on wrote a song called 'I'm Bugged at My Old Man,' and he meant it as a put-on, but he meant it.

"It was early 1961 when Mike Love and Al Jardine were coming over to the house and Brian was teaching them songs, with Carl. They sang Four Freshman songs almost like the Four Freshman, except they had a sweeter, younger sound. So, eight months before the record 'Surfin'' of December 8th, 1961, is when the Beach Boys really started.

"Brian taught himself. He's a musical . . . he thinks in six-part harmony, instead of two- or three-part. He's not only a writer, he's an arranger, and he has a concept of harmonics which is uncanny.

"When Brian was eight years old, he sang in a concert, singing one of Mike Love's songs."

A public concert?

"Well, my sister—Mike's mother, Mrs. Love, Emily Love—loved music. She didn't play piano or anything, but she loved music and she gave this concert in my honor as a songwriter. And they featured several of my songs—she even hired a trio, a musical group, to play my songs for this concert."

This was for an audience?

"Yes, it was for school friends and teachers and friends of hers. And Mike Love wrote a song called 'The Old Soldier,' about a soldier that died, you know, in the war? He was only nine and a half when he wrote it. I heard it over at my sister's house, and I thought it was just darling. But I heard it as a hymn, it was a song in hymn form."

Murry started to sing, slowly, with great reverence. "Da-da da da/da-da dee da/dee-dee da da/da-dee da." See? I went home and composed other lyrics to it: 'When Jesus Calls His Soldiers—When Jesus says to follow, I will be there.' It's called 'By His Side,' subtitled, 'When Jesus Calls His Soldiers.'

"So when he was eight years old I bought Brian his first suit with long pants, and he sang both versions of Mike's song at this concert. We taught him both sets of lyrics, Mike's and mine, and he brought the house down.

"So Brian showed early promise. In fact—now this is the truth, you may not believe it—when Brian was born, I was one of those young, frightened fathers, you know? But I just fell in love with him, and in three weeks he cooed back at me, responded. And when he was eleven and a half months — it was just at World War II—I would carry Brian on my shoulders with his little hands up above, and I would sing, 'Do do do, do do do,' you know, 'Caissons Go Marching Along?' And he could hum the whole song—'Do do do, do do do, do do do dee do do do.' But he didn't know how to end the last line.

"When he was 11 months old he was very clever and quick. I taught him how to say Mississippi. When most children were saying 'Da-da ma-ma, da-da ma-ma,' he said 'Mi-sez-zip-py,' you know? He's a very smart kid."

\* \* \*

I'm bugged at my old man

'Cause he's makin' me stay in my room

(Darn my dad)

\* \* \*

THE FIRST MAN Manager Murry Wilson ran into at Capitol Records was Producer Nick Venet. Their association, in fact, was a series of run-ins, which Venet has a talent for recounting rather colorfully. Before he gets started, however, Carl Wilson would like to put in this disclaimer:

"I must say Nick Venet is really full of shit. Regarding us. He did an interview with a large magazine, the Saturday Evening Post, and he really lied his balls off in it. See, actually, he hardly had nothing to do with the group. He would be in the booth, and he would call the take number, and that was about it. I wouldn't call him a musical heavy by any . . . Brian didn't want anything to do with Venet.

"The people at Capitol didn't like my dad at all, because he really gave them a hard time. If he thought that something was unfair. A lot of the executives didn't like him at all—which is perfectly understandable, but we were his kids, you know?"

Now, here's the Venet version:

"I don't think the father really knew where his son was at. Murry Wilson once told me that his son was the next Elvis Presley. I said, 'Mr. Wilson, I think Brian might be as big as Presley in sales, but I don't think he wants to be Presley.' He said, 'No, he's doing everything Presley does—but he's doing it better.' I said, 'Mr. Wilson, I think Brian's doing a different kind of music which is really Brian Wilson music.' He kind of shook his head, looked at me and walked away.

"I thought at first that the father would be an anchor, but later I found out he had his own theories and he was also a songwriter, in the great style of Albert Crankshaw. Albert Crankshaw died in 1936. People who knew him well called him Mr. Show Business. That was in Cleveland. He wrote three or four songs: 'I Want To Go Back To Copenhagen,' 'Mary Sweet Mary Come Back Home.' He also wrote a song called 'Adios, My Buddy, Adios.' Murry wrote in this flavor, and I think Murry wanted to be more involved with the Beach Boys' music. Because in those days you would put one side on the record for the kids and one side for the grown-ups—terrific!

"I think Murry wanted to 'elevate' the boys by putting them into 'pret-ty music,' nice music, terrific music, a rumba, a fox trot, a mambo. I think that was an underlying thing in Murry's mind. They had a few fights about music and

things. Yeah, I think Murry really fucked up the group for a couple of years. Oh, I'm gonna get sued again . . .

"I used to get locked up in the office with the man. I was into all kinds of great things with Les McCann and Lou Rawls, and the next morning I would have to come to work at 9 o'clock after being up all night with great music—and I would walk into that office and there would be Murry Wilson. And that motherfucker would sit there till 5 or 6 o'clock and tell me about his songs and play me his melodies, and I had to listen to him because somewhere in the conversation he would always drop to me what Brian's next record was gonna be. Everyone in the building avoided him but I was stuck with him, 'cause I was the 'producer.'

"The father kept trying to worm his way into a recording deal. Eventually he made one with Capitol. This is a bust, this is hilarious, now that I'm not with Capitol. Capitol made a whole album and released it for that asshole, just so they could satisfy him and so he wouldn't hassle them so much on some of the Beach Boy things. It was the worst fucking album, and Capitol put it out, and they had to advertise it.

"One day I looked out my window and My God! he had cornered the president of Capitol in the parking lot. I was sent down there. They said, 'Get out there and somehow draw his attention.' I had to bump into him and say, 'Oh Murry, I've been looking for you all day. I have some new pictures on the kids I have to show you.' Just to get the motherfucker away from the owner of the company so he'd get something done for the day.

"I think the father did nothing but hinder them, but I think he assumed a lot of credit. If he heard them doing something good, he'd say, 'Right.' And he was about three beats behind Brian. For instance, Brian would say, 'Let's do that again.' He would say, 'Let's do that again.' Got to the point where Brian would say, 'Le . . . ' and he would say, 'Let's do that again.'

"The old man got to the point where he could see when a cat put his instrument down out there, that he was gonna stop the take. And Brian wouldn't see, say for instance, that the drummer had put his sticks down or waved his arm to stop the take. The father would say, 'Let's stop that take.' And of course, Brian thought for a while, there, the old man knew what he was doing.

"I used to hide under my desk. He used to look in my office to see if I was in there so I ordered a new desk because it had a front on it. The chick downstairs would buzz me: 'Man, here he comes.' I would tuck myself under my desk, 'cause there was no exit but the front door. And he would come in, wouldn't take the secretary's 'he's not in,' would walk into the office; he would look and I wasn't there and he would split. Well, one day he came in and used the fucking phone, man, and I got



The Wilson boys' father, Murry, as he appeared on his own album, *'The Many Moods of Murry Wilson'*: he discovered his boys, he discovered Eck Kynor, the songwriting plumber



Annie Leibovitz

to tell you, I sat under that desk for five hours. And when I came out I couldn't use my left leg for two days. But I would rather sit under that desk than face that man and his never-ending success stories of 1920 melodies.

"I could never get along with the father. He's rather Bomb-Hanoi-ish, but he's a very nice kind of guy."

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This album is a first! Because it features Murry Wilson—songwriter!

Until this time, the public has known Murry Wilson only as the father and initial personal manager-recording director of the world famous Beach Boys. The man who rocketed them into a phenomenal career.

Now, it's Murry Wilson's turn! You will hear a side of Murry that only his family and close friends are aware of—the songwriter with a flair for melodic structure! And you'll also hear a fantastic mixture of sounds uncommon to most recordings!

—Album notes to *'The Many Moods of Murry Wilson'*  
Capitol T 2819

File under: Wilson—Instrumental

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NICK is a nice guy," reflected Murry. "He's got a lot of talent, apparently, 'cause he's still around. He may never get rich, but he's made a lot of records.

"I had to get rid of Nick Venet out of the Beach Boys' careers because he was not doing right by them. He was responsible for having the big shot at Capitol, Voyle Gilmore, hear the song, 'Surfin' Safari.' Nick acted real cool. He says, 'You come back in an hour and we'll let you know if we want you to be Capitol recording artists.' He didn't act like he was too excited.

"So we walked out of there, and I said, 'Brian, let's make them wait five minutes, you know, let's don't act too eager.' This is the truth. And we got back in an hour and five minutes.

"In the meantime — we found out later — Nick Venet rushed across the tower on the 12th floor, raced across the offices, burst in on Gilmore and says, 'Boss, I've got a double-sided smash for Capitol.' And he was right.

"We knew we were good. We told Nick Venet right at the outset we thought 'Surfin' Safari' was the A side. He says, no, '409.' So Capitol put all the push on '409' and had to turn the damn record over in about three weeks. 'Surfin' Safari' was the song that made them surfing kings, vocally and lyrically, around the United States.

"Actually, the truth is, Nick started out OK. He called me up one day, after I handed him the tapes on 'Surfin' Safari,' and said, 'Now, we can't have two producers. You're over the hill, old man, and I'm young and I know the tempo and I sold \$50 million worth of records for Capitol last year, so move over and let me take your sons and make big stars out of them.' That's what he told me in a nice way. And I said, 'OK, well, do a good job with them, Nick, they're your babies.' And I was kinda glad because it was a lot of pressure. You can work with strangers easier than you can your own goddamn kids, you know.

"But the boys refused to have Nick as their producer because he didn't tell the truth to them. He'd say, 'Brian, be here at 2:00; we're going to master out your record,' and then he would do the mastering himself, before Brian got there. What he did was outsmart Brian.

"So Brian came home one day from Capitol very blue, and he broke into tears and said, 'Goddammit, Dad . . .'" Murry made some boo hoo noises with his lips. "Bub-ub-ub-ub, will you go down and tell Capitol we don't want him anymore, he's changing our sound." So Dad went down and talked to Voyle Gilmore, the vice president, and I told him right to his face, 'You folks don't know how to produce a rock and roll hit in your studios downstairs.' See, their engineers were used to good music, not rock and roll. We wanted to use Western Recorders. I told him, 'Leave us alone and we'll make hits for you.' He got red in the face. But that's all petty shit, I mean petty crap, sorry.

"We knew we were right. Before the Beach Boys went to Capitol, Capitol was number eight on singles hits. But the year they joined, Capitol went from number eight to number two, you understand?

"As far as I'm concerned about Nick Venet, naturally he probably feels a

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# The Beach Boys

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little bitter because he could have had world fame as their producer. So all the stuff he said about me I discount. I was tough as a manager. I fought Capitol for four and a half months, straight. Finally, Capitol recapitulated and let us record where we wanted to, without the impedence of the, ha ha, Artists' Representative. That'll give Nick a little joggle in his memory.

"The boys were so eager to prove how good they could be as artists—record makers, not artists, they weren't artists till the phonies started telling them they were. At Western Records I remember they stood and sang 13 hours straight, 13 hours straight, to get an album out — *Surfin' U.S.A.* Sometimes they were so exhausted, I had to make them mad at me to get the best out of them. So I'd insult their musical integrity, I'd say, 'That's lousy, you guys can do better than that.' I'd make them so damn mad they'd be hitting me over the head practically, but they'd give that extra burst of energy and do it beautifully. The old man outsmarted them without their knowledge, see what I mean? There's more than one way to give love to kids, you know, for their own good.

"I held them down for nine months—you might write *this* in—I held them down from the big time for nine months. Even after they had two major double-sided hits in the nation, they were too green to go 'way into the big time and New York and huge concerts. I held them down and took jobs at dances, first, and then we went to different department stores, you know. One of their first dates was a dance in Inglewood, California, and they played at Long Beach. Their first major concert was one I produced at the Sacramento Civic. We have a dear feeling for Sacramento.

"You see, a manager and a father can be pretty rough. It's like some teachers. The kids hate the teacher's trying to give them knowledge, you know? And till they're grown up and married, they don't realize how nice the teacher was to bang at them, you know, to bang their ears.

"I drove the Beach Boys through the wall. When they were exhausted, I drove them harder, because they asked for it. They said, 'Help us, make us famous, help us record, we need you, Dad.' I wish you'd print this—I was told by a young man, a 22-year-old man at William Morris, that the Beach Boys would never make more money than Ruby and the Romantics, who were grossing \$3500 for seven days a week. This was after my sons' first double-sided hit on Capitol. I got so mad. It was December 17th. I called from my home to key places, and we worked between Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. We grossed \$26,684—write it down—\$26,684 for five nights, five concerts. That was in 1962."

"Ever since I was born—or maybe, when I was two years old, somebody punched me in the ear."

—Brian Wilson, explaining why he is deaf in one ear.

EARL LEAF of Hollywood, the elderly teen columnist once hired by the Beach Boys to start a fan sheet, recalled with no little relish certain eccentricities of Mike Love during the group's first European tour.

"Well, maybe you can't say he's eccentric, but he's wild," said Earl, leafing through a pile of glossies he'd shot of the trip. "He was awfully wild and still is, I suppose. I don't mean violence . . . girlwise, he'd fuck any . . . he was worse . . . Dennis was the worst. Dennis was an animal.

"Mike was always getting into some kind of jam. He was stupid. We were in Paris, for instance. We got in a night club . . . a clip joint actually. I didn't want to go in; I lived in Paris, you know, for a couple of years. I know a clip joint. So we went in, and he got this girl, and she said, 'Yeah, I'll go home with you. I can't go home now. Just hang around. I have to wait till we close at 4 A.M.'

Meanwhile, this guy is pumping him with champagne, about 4000 francs a bottle. He took one glass out of a bottle and threw the rest away, bring-

another bottle. Four A.M., well, he couldn't find her, she's nowhere around, she'd split.

"He was just a horse's ass. Same thing happened in Munich. He went and found a girl and started feelin' her up and her pimp came and got a gun and held him until the police came. He spent the night in jail. Same thing happened in London. He gave this girl a whole lot of money to fuck her. She said, 'OK, I'll meet you in 15 minutes. You go down to such and such a street and turn right two blocks and wait for me on the corner.' So he rushes down there and of course she never showed up. He was old enough to know better. Over and over and over again he was taken.

"We were goin' down in a cab from the Hilton to Soho. I said, 'Listen, you guys, don't be a horse's ass. This place is so full of whores and places that are just clip joints. You never get anything out of it.' I can't remember if it was Mike or Dennis said, 'Well, we can afford it. I don't care if we get clipped, we can afford it.'"

Nick Venet had something to add: "If I had listened to the father back then, the Beach Boys would have fired Mike Love on their first tour. The father came roaring into my office one day and asked me to check out the legality and prepare papers. I just said, 'That's terrific. How shall we do this? That's just terrific sir. Do you want me to call him on the phone, or send him a telegram? Or do you want me to push him out a window? Which way do you want me to do this?' He got very serious, he got bugged with me and he said, 'The boy used profanity backstage.'"

"Well, shit, my curiosity . . . you know, what kind of profanity could he have used? It was 'fuck' he had said twice, once before the show, once after the show, both times backstage. Biggest act in the country and he wants to break them up 'cause he used the word fuck!"

Later, Murry indicated he never actually planned to break up the group over Mike. "Nick said that? I probably threatened to do it. I was tough on obscenity. Mike swore under the mike one time at a dance. It slipped. I said, 'Don't you ever pull that again, Mike.' He said, 'Well, it slipped,' and I said, 'Well, don't let it slip again.'"

"There was nothing vulgar. I even had their attire—I don't want to go into detail—but even their wearing apparel was purchased so it wouldn't be vulgar. There wasn't any vulgarity on stage. They wore those striped shirts, and they wore pants. But they didn't wear those, you know, those continental-type tight things that a lot of the New York boys were coming out with at that time. Elvis, you know? Don't use Elvis; say 'other artists.'"

"I worried about things like that. I traveled around with my kids, worrying about them, getting rid of girls with shady characters, on occasion getting rid of girls who were too eager, shall we say, to become acquainted. They had a clean-cut American image. Mike was 21, you know, so he was allowed to drink beer. If I caught anyone else drinking beer—once in a while in my home a glass was all right—but on tours, I said, 'No Drinking. If I catch any of you guys, you're going to be fined five hundred dollars.' I was tough on them. Once, I assessed a \$300 fine to one of them—I can't say which one—for drinking a cocktail. I never got a dime of it.

"In other words—if you print anything—I love my sons, you understand? And although they were big stars, I never gave up on them. Even to this day, when a son comes off and starts giving me a Hollywood approach, I say, 'What are you doing—coming off phony, Hollywood, baby?' Right down their throat. I kept at them, beating their eardrums, because I knew that fame and fortune might distort them."

Brian's not the only Beach Boy who likes to explore the borders of inner space. His cousin Mike Love once fasted for three weeks, taking only water, fruit juice, and a little yogurt. It was an approximation of the Essene regimen, de-

veloped by a strict sect of religious Jews. Everything got very amplified during the fast, he became quite sensitive to all positive and negative forces around him. He began to look at things rather *metaphorically*. The birds in the sky seemed to have a purpose in flying southwesterly, and if he could try a little harder perhaps he could talk to the birds. . .

As he protested, "I'm fine, I'm going to Hawaii to mellow out," his brother drove him to a hospital and said, "You'd better check this boy over."

They simply found that he hadn't been eating. Once he started to eat and meditate again, he was out in four or five days. He learned from the fast. He learned not to do it again.

Mike was given equal time to refute Earl Leaf's contention that he had been

opus on the 20-20 album with an ominous message: *Surrender . . . I'm your kind . . . Come in, closer, come in, closer, closer.*

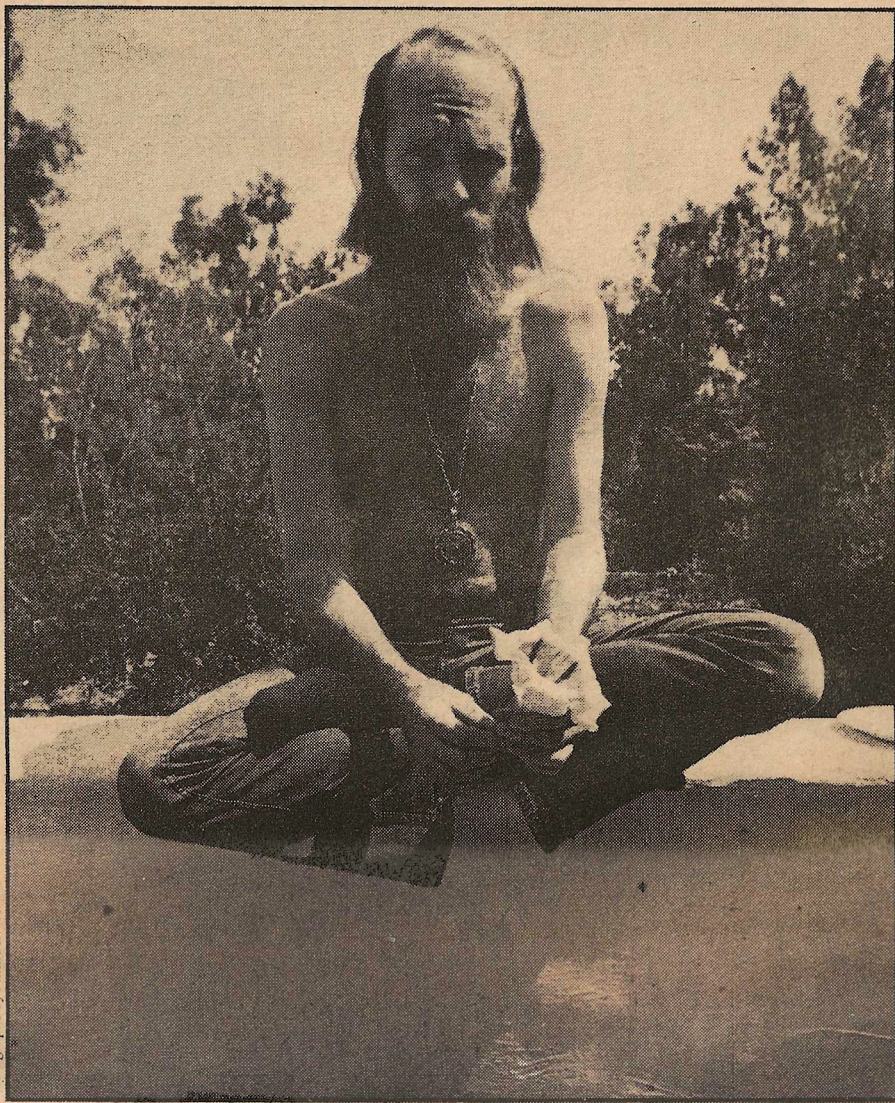
"That's right, he did."

Why didn't you give him the label credit?

"He didn't want that. He wanted money instead. I gave him about a hundred thousand dollars' worth of stuff.

"But I don't think you should put that in your story. I see no reason the story should mention him at all."

Another Beach Boy, an anonymous one, is a little more talkative about it. "Charlie struck me as a very intense and dogmatic hype. I didn't want nothin' to do with Charlie. He was living with Dennis at the time. Dennis was just divorced; I suppose the life-style ap-



Murry worried about them all: Mike Love and his foul mouth . . .

taken for a ride all over Europe. "It wasn't all over Europe, it was only once, in Germany. I was going to go to this girl's house for a drink. I found her outside with some other fella in a Mercedes. I was pretty drunk. I had on these black gloves. I smashed his window in. The only minor problem was, he had a gun. That was in my wild youth, I don't do that anymore. I never did make a habit of it.

"Earl's a lecherous old man, he's just jealous. Anything Earl Leaf says must be sifted through a sieve. He elaborates in his senility."

Mike wanted a plug given to his little brother Steve who graduated magna cum laude from the University of Southern California in history and Spanish and recently earned his Master's in business administration and works full-time for the Beach Boys' management; and a plug to his other little brother Stanley (6'9") who broke all basketball scoring records at the University of Oregon and was signed to the Baltimore Bullets for half a million dollars. He also has a sister who sings and another who plays the harp.

Why did he sell my surfboard  
He cut off my hair last night in my sleep

I wish I could see outside  
But he tacked up boards on my window  
(Gosh it's dark)

DENNIS WILSON, toenails tough like brazil nuts, has been surfing for 13 years. It was Dennis who came out of the water and told Brian what it was like out there. It was Brian who fooled the world.

Dennis was asked if it was true Charles Manson wrote the words of "Never Learn Not to Love," an eerie

pealed to him. Perhaps I have more sexual inhibitions, moral strictures. I wasn't into drugs at that point, which was Charlie's way of conditioning his little friends, turning them into egoless entities. I wasn't going for his pitch.

"Dennis ran up the largest gonorrhea bill in history the time the whole family got the clap. He took them all to a Beverly Hills doctor—it took something like a thousand dollars in penicillin.

"We've got several eight-track tapes of Charlie and the girls that Dennis cut, maybe even some 16-track. Just chanting, fucking, sucking, barfing. Maybe we'll put it out in the fall. Call it 'Death Row.'"

"It was a million laughs, believe me."

Dennis said he didn't want all this mentioned.

"Just say Dennis was the farthest out in life-style of any of us, having known Charles Manson before he made the headlines. And that he requested you not to bring it up."

Carl remembers that Dennis did get in more trouble than the others. "Dennis is for sure the most physical of the group," he said. "He has the most nervous energy. I've never witnessed energy like that. His music, the music he likes to write best, is really serious. It's sort of like practical, you know? He's more sort of a physical earth person; he likes simple things, he likes gardening a lot. He's into nature quite a bit.

"There was a big drain ditch near where we used to live. It was really dark down there, and you could take it from right by our house all the way to the beach. We'd ride our bikes down it, and the trip was to see how far you could go without getting scared out of your mind. It was a daredevil thing. I believe Dennis probably did go in the furthest.

"Dennis was the best surfer and he was the one who really had the idea for the group."

According to Murry, this is how it all started. "They had written a song called 'Surfin', which I never did like and still don't like, it was so rude and crude, you know? Dennis made them write it. He told them, 'Write a song about surfing.' He bugged them. He was an avid surfer. He'd disappear every Saturday and Sunday he could, without cutting the lawn—you might put that in, too—without cutting the lawn. He loved the sport.

"And so they kept saying to Mr. Morgan, Hite Morgan, my publisher, 'We've written a song about the surfing sport and we'd like to sing it for you.' Finally he agreed to hear it, and Mrs. Morgan said, 'Drop everything, we're going to record your song. I think it's good.' And she's the one responsible.

"We were in Paris, doing a UNICEF show, and we met Maharishi there. We talked to him for several hours, and we were all initiated. I meditate regularly. It's helped me to cope with things. Things affect me less. Bad things affect me less—pardon me, I would rather say *difficult* things. I find that it relaxes me very deeply and gives me energy. I recommend it highly."

Possibly it is Transcendental Meditation that allows Carl to cope so philosophically with the *difficult* moments in the Beach Boys saga, such as the time Brian suddenly canceled out of the first Monterey Pop Festival, a move some feel stunted their careers for years.

"Brian was on the board, and it changed several times, the concept of it. And he decided, 'Well, shit, let's not

could in eternity say. As far as really holy sounds go."

"The music business has been good to the entire Wilson family," adds Murry. "And, this album, which has been mixed as emotionally as possible, retaining color, shading and warmth, is humbly offered to the public."

—Notes to 'The Many Moods of Murry Wilson'

SEE, THE whole trade has given Brian credit for everything. Truthfully—I'm not beating myself on the back, but knowing them as a *father*, I knew their voices, right? And I'm musical, my wife is, we *knew* how to sing on key and when they were flat and sharp and how they should sound good in a song. And we put the echo on they wanted, and we got the balance; we used Telefunken mikes and we surged on their power here and there to make them sound better. When they'd run out of wind at the end of the sentence, we'd surge on the power to keep the level of their musical tone the same. Or if they were singing a phrase weak, when Mike was singing 'She's fine, that 409,' we'd surge on the part. Without their knowledge, at first.

"A lot of artists think they're doing it all because they get in front of a mike and open their damn mouths. But most artists have an engineer, a smart engineer, *surging* on the power here and there to help them when they're weak and tired and run out of gas, to put an echo on them here and there and make them sound like gods. He's got a lot of beautiful people, unsung heroes, under him, helping him make his career. Not to mention the record company and all the promotional people in the field, and the jobbers that push the records and everybody else that helps, you know? A lot of people. Artists don't make themselves."

That was Murry Wilson describing how he helped produce "409," one of the Beach Boys' earliest songs.

Here's Carl describing how he produced "Feel Flows": I played piano first and then I played organ. I played piano twice, overdubbed it, and used a variable speed oscillator to make the track different speeds so that the piano would be a little bit out of tune, sort of a spread sound, do you understand what I mean? You play the tape at 30 inches per second, and then you may slow it down to about 29 and 3/4 inches per second. It wouldn't be that great actually, I got my cycles mixed up with inches per second. But say at 60 cycles and then 59. So that makes the piano sound like the effect of a 12-string guitar, you know? When the two strings are at the same octave but just a tiny bit out of tune? you know that real ringing sound?

"And then I put the organ on and put it through the Moog at the same time, so that one side of the stereo had the direct organ sound and the other side had the return through the Moog synthesizer. It's sort of like a vibrato, but the frequency changes, there's a tone change, like a graphic tone. Do you know what a graphic equalizer is? Well, it just springs out, you can amplify any particular part of a sound spectrum, like from 50 cycles to 10,000 cycles. The Moog did that automatically; there's a component called a sequencer and you can time it to react and go through a series of circuits all connected to a different frequency, and it does that back and forth. And therefore it sounded sort of like a vibrato or a wah-wah, sort of both at the same time.

"Then I put on the bass, played the bass guitar. Then I put on the Moog for that part where the piano comes in by itself after the instrumental part, you know? Then we put on the bells, and a guy named Woody Thews played percussion on it, and I sang it. I put the guitar on about the same time.

"Then I think it was the next day Charles Lloyd came by and we did the flute and saxophone. And I might add, he heard it one time and then started playing, he started recording right away. It was really a thrill for me to have him play on it 'cause he's a gifted musician. It was really great. And then the next session we did the vocals, the background part, and that was it."

Why did the Beach Boys record monaurally for so many years?

"Well, Brian had control of all the production," said Carl, "and he liked it better. Plus he can't comprehend stereo, really."

He still can't?

"No, not with one ear. Only one works, you know. He had an operation but it wasn't successful at the time. Whenever his ear is fatigued, his bad ear, his right ear, will start to work. But it will be very painful and sound very low fidelity, like one of those tin can walkie-talkies, you know? That's how he explained it, anyway, and he gets out of balance and everything. It's been that way for many years. Ever since he was an infant.

"I believe that his hearing is going to return. I just have a feeling. And he will be very inspired when it does."

"When he was 11 years old," Murry remembered, "Mrs. Wilson discovered that he kept turning his head. And she found out that he couldn't hear very well out of that ear. Then it got worse and he became deaf in that ear. He was injured in some . . . either a football game or some injury of some kind. Or it just happened, who knows?"

There's a rumor going around that you might have hit him on the ear when he was young.

"Oh, I spanked his bottom, you know, like any father would do to a kid, just whap him a little bit. No, I never hit my kid on the ear. No. No. I was too strong. If anyone caused that rumor, all I hope is that they have itchy piles for ten years. Because I never hit my son Brian on the ear. Never. No."

Murry also denied the story of Brian's dumping on his father's dinner plate.

"No, that's absolutely not true. No, no. I don't know who said that, they're putting you on. In fact, we wouldn't put up with any of that crap."

What did you think when you read Brian had experimented with LSD?

"I told him . . . we were driving to a recording session, and I said, 'I heard that you experimented with LSD. Is that a put-on to the newspaper, or did you do it?' And he said, 'Yes, Dad, I did,' and I said, 'Well tell me, Brian, do you think you're strong enough in your brain that you can experiment with a chemical that might drive you crazy later?' He says, 'No, Dad, it's opened a lot of things for me.' And I said, 'Brian, who you trying to kid?' He said, 'Well, I had weird, weird hallucinations, it made me understand.' And I said, 'Who you trying to kid, Brian? What did you understand, except seeing a bunch of different like nightmares in your brain, colors and things like that?' And he agreed that he'd never do it again.

"And I said, 'You know, Brian, one thing God gives you is a brain, if you play with it and destroy it, you're dead, you're a vegetable.' And we haven't heard the rest of this, there are going to be a lot of people killed and people in sanitariums, insane asylums, because they played, you know, they played with God.

"If you want to print it, I would be happy to have you do it. These guys that have to be freaked out on marijuana and other things on stage to become artists, should never have the *privilege* of stepping onto a stage to play for young impressionable people."

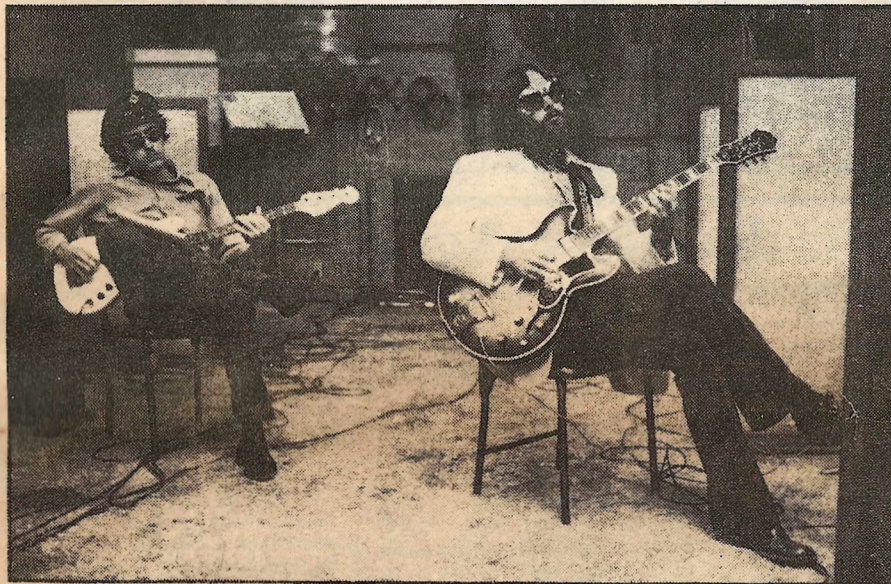
Murry paused briefly to light his pipe and muse over the proud feats of his first son. It was true, Brian, with the help of his father's strict family training, had resisted the temptations of success—pressures of performing, the phoniness, the dope, the tight pants—to devote his life to music.

"*Pet Sounds* is a masterpiece of accomplishment for Brian," said Murry. "The public doesn't realize it, most of them. But Brian took the masters, a lot of the masters, approached the music in his own way and put a rock and roll beat to it. He even got Stephen Foster in there—phrases that we used to sing when he was a baby, you know? And it's twisted around with his beautiful approach to rock and roll, and his bass root; his bass root figurations of the bass guitar is fantastic!"

"*Pet Sounds* has been copied, chewed up, renewed—Negro artists have used it in band arrangements, commercials have used it. Every day you hear a commercial that has a Beach Boys sound in back of it.

"Every ten years or so there comes an arranger or musical brain that does this. Like Mancini did it for eight years, right? Now Bacharach is having his heyday. Very brilliant young man, Bacharach.

"Mancini is a God-given talent. And so is Brian Wilson."



... Dennis, the most physical & far-out, and Carl, transcendental heavy

"It came out on the Candix label, and it was played on three stations in L.A. every hour, 24 hours a day. Sam Riddle introduced it on KDAY, and Russ Reagan—well-known producer and record figure, who was then handling Candix and who gave them the name Beach Boys—got it on KFWB and KRLA. And it went to 76 on the Top 100 chart.

"Then after 'Surfin' the boys were off the air and they couldn't get back on the air. No one wanted them, they thought they were a one-shot record. Al Jardine hit the road and enrolled in dental school. Mr. Morgan and I went to Dot Records and cooled our heels in the foyer, nobody would talk to us. We went to Liberty, and the big shots were too busy to see us. And finally I asked Mr. Morgan, who produced 'Surfin', 'What'll we do?' He says, 'I don't know, Murry, you're their Dad and manager, rots of ruck to you.' And he says goodbye. And that cost him \$2,700,000, that statement. It cost him \$2,700,000."

Murry was asked what he thought when the news came out about Dennis and Charles Manson. "I told my sons a long time ago," he said, "be careful who you choose as your friends."

ALL THE Beach Boys except Bruce Johnston practice, to one degree or another, Transcendental Meditation, as personally introduced to them by Maharishi. But perhaps Carl the Youngest just shows it more. Always the most even-tempered of the group, he now speaks in an almost temperless cherubic voice.

"Maharishi, he's really fantastic to be with. Every time I've been with him I've felt very good. He's a very spontaneous person. How happy he is, and things like his laugh are very contagious. And very powerful.

play it.' And I think there were some people getting hostile about the group at the time, you know, about the surfing thing. And he figured, 'Fuck you,' or something like that, I don't know.

"I'm really glad the way things have turned out. I'm really grateful, actually, the way everything has happened. The most important thing was that we had a chance to sort of cool out and develop, you know? That was necessary for the group to really carry on and do anything. 'Cause you could make hits all week long, but it just wouldn't mean shit. As far as making good music, you need time, I mean some of us do. Brian advanced 'way beyond the rest of the group, and we really had to start to catch up."

Since then the others have caught up considerably, although Carl is quick to emphasize, "We're far from becoming Brian Wilsons, believe me." All but Mike Love can play many instruments, including the Moog, and Mike can play Theremin. Each Beach Boy is capable of producing an entire song by himself—playing and singing all parts—and, theoretically, an entire album. Carl, perhaps, has grown the most dramatically and now unofficially leads the group both on the road and in the studio. And the future lies ahead.

"Speaking for myself," as Carl usually does, "musically I'm most influenced by Brian. I mean that's obvious. And I've been writing a lot of songs lately. Dennis is writing a lot of beautiful music, and Brian's writing some beautiful songs. Everybody's writing. I don't know exactly what's gonna happen yet. I just know there's gonna be a lot of music."

"The main trip is music for sure. Brian was always more into music as a vibration, a sound feeling and vibration, right? more than lyrics or anything words could ever say. And it's really true. Music, a really heavy vibration, says a lot more than a million words